FROM RESIDENTIAL TOURISM TO TOURIST REAL ESTATE COMPLEXES: THE APPROPRIATION OF THE COASTAL ZONE IN THE NORTHEAST OF BRAZIL BY TOURIST REAL ESTATE ACTIVITIES

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Introduction

Tourism is an activity that besides provoking studies and reflections, has also provided space for political and economic disputes in favour of a tourist market that sells space and cultures (ADRIÃO, 2003). New residential, mobility and leisure formats (ALEDO, 2008), an impactful proliferation of the real estate phenomenon throughout the world (MATTEUCCI, 2011), and the reurbanization of rural spaces (CONTRERAS, 2010), amongst other factors that are more global and regional, have produced the tourism of second residences over time.

In Brazil's case, as the century has gone by, the coastal zone of the country has been the target of diverse forms of aggression as a consequence, principally, of the social, economic, political, cultural and environmental transformations resulting from the discourse of development. Notably on the northeast coast, vaunted as the "Brazilian Cancun" (Spinelli, 2007), the strength of tourist activity as an instrument of development has become even greater, especially due to the extraordinary natural potential, geographic location, climate conditions and even due to the natural hospitality, which is so characteristic of this region's inhabitants. This reinforces the argument

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of Endres (2008, p.75) that "In the Northeast of Brazil the possibilities of success in the incentive of tourism can be found in the beautiful coastal scenery, the principal attraction that generates mass tourism and brings with it the much proclaimed local development (…)".

The wake of this false logic occurred along the coastline of north-eastern Brazil, beginning in the 1980s with a "boom" in the implantation of numerous hotel undertakings targeted on the leisure segment of "sun and sea". With the majority being incentivized by public financing, attracted by tax incentives and other benefits offered by government authorities, as well as by the low cost of land and labor.

This territoriality of tourism, according to Coriolano *et al* (2012), was profoundly marked by *resorts*. Starting in the 1990s a new "*boom*" began in the domestic tourism market, particularly along the northeast coastline of Brazil, by way of undertakings denominated here as Tourist Real Estate Complexes (TRECs). Following this line, new spaces have been continuously constructed and reconstructed to attend to socioeconomic necessities and interests (SELVA, 2012).

Large international groups, principally European, migrated their investments to this new modality along the strips of the north-eastern coastline. These groups found paradisiacal beaches and low costs when compared to the prices offered on the Old Continent, and an environment highly favourable for this type of investment, particularly because of the widespread use of this in the European market, due to the ever-increasing socio-environmental requirements on that continent, and the natural risks (hurricanes and tsunamis) of the Caribbean and Asia (similar destinations and competitors to the northeast Brazilian coastline). Currently, all the states in the northeast have at least one tourism real estate investment being advertised. This increase in value of coastal areas is characterized by tourism for the elite, resulting in diverse social, cultural and economic contradictions (CORIOLANO *et al*, 2012).

However, the surging forward of a new standard of tourism can now be observed, with it no longer occurring by the intermediation of traditional and residential tourism on an isolated basis, but now beginning with the union of these two models of tourism. This new model, represented by the TRECs, considerably increases the possible financial return of the investors. However, in virtue of the results that have been observed, it also contributes, in a preoccupying way, to the aggravation of the socioenvironmental impact that occurs with the native communities, who are the traditional occupants of the spaces consumed by tourist real estate activities. According to Selva (2012), the urbanization process that is a result of this type of expansion can be viewed as a process for turning environments artificial by way of the commercialization of natural elements, thus promoting a transformation of space.

As much for Marcelino (2001); Silva et al (2012), as for Coriolano et al (2012) this development model rooted in the touristification[i] of space can be seen as a form of social segregation as it expels native groups of people from their original places of settlement, promotes considerable price increases in property, and provokes opposition between the centre and the periphery, thus providing for the emergence of cultural, social and economic contradictions.

In this way, the incompatibilities between the socialization of the production of the space and its private appropriation are heightened. The dynamic of the social and spatial segregation provoked by this tourist activity belongs to capitalism. According to Santos (1988), the territory organizes and reorganizes itself many times, and in various ways, so as to attend to the production requirements of which it is the backbone.

Based on what has been written so far, this article's objective is to analyse the development process of tourist real estate along the northeast Brazilian coastline, conceptualizing what the TRECs become and identifying the tourist real estate undertakings implanted, or in the phase of implantation in the region that is the objective of this study, at the same time as performing a brief investigation into the historical/conceptual evolution of residential tourism.

2. Methodological procedures

Ample bibliographical and documental research in public and private files was undertaken using the transformation of tourist real estate in the Brazilian Northeast as the starting point. It needs to be pointed out that the main representative entity of tourist real estate in Brazil, the Associação de Desenvolvimento Imobiliário e Turístico do Nordeste (ADIT), when interviewed did not release up to date information, rather indicating other sources like "Exame Magazine's Year Book", which is also an out of date source. Consequently, a meticulous exploratory survey was carried out, having been identified 53 tourist real estate complexes present in the nine states of the Brazilian northeast.

Two states were designated for the on-site visits. Simultaneously with the field research into communities affected by the TRECs, photographs were taken, together with the undertaking of non-systematic observation and semi-structured interviews. Amongst those interviewed were: government representatives (municipal, state and federal), social stakeholders from the settlements, more than 100 inhabitants from one of the municipalities impacted by the TRECs (by way of a non-probabilistic and by convenience sample) and a representative of a Spanish study center. In total, 144 people were interviewed in four stages. The approach that was chosen was qualitative-quantitative.

3. Residential tourism

According to Demajorovic et al (2011) residential tourism was one of the main forms of tourism in development during the second half of the last century, principally in the Spanish part of the Mediterranean beginning in the 1970s. Strapp (1988) demonstrated that this model of tourism was neglected by American and European researchers for some time. In the conception of Mazón e Aledo (2005) it is an activity that is dedicated to the urbanization, construction and sale of residences, whose owners, that reside in other places, use with the objective of residing or spending the summer, in a permanent or semi-permanent way, representing new forms of mobility and housing in contemporary society. Beach front communities constitute a frequently common modality amongst the four types of second residences registered by Müller and Marjavaara (2011). Due to the

dynamic character of second residences, and in particular the change in relationship between first and second residences, it has become difficult to measure and identify what in truth is a first or second residence (Coppock, 1977). This conceptual difficulty of measurement justifies, including internationally, the countless conceptualizations and multiplicity of terms used in the relevant literature, for example, "*second homes*, "*vacations homes*", "*seasonal homes*", "*weekend homes*", "*cottages*", "*recreational homes*", "*huts*", etc." (ROCA *et al* 2009).

Even though historically, second residences are not a recent phenomenon, it was after World War II, according to Cravidão (2008), corroborating with Patuleia (2011), that this activity showed intense growth, especially in Europe. For this author, the first study about the subject was undertaken by the geographer Barbier (1965) in France and was named, *Méthodes d''etudes dês résidences secondaires. L'exemple dês Basses-Alpes.* This study defined a second residence as "the accommodation that belongs to an individual that already possesses his/her main housing, and that resides in the majority of cases in the city, or at least away from his/her house in the country to which he/she goes to at the weekends or during the holidays (Barbier *apud* Cravidão, 2008). Later, but still in France, in 1970 and 1973, as affirmed by Cravidão (2008), came to the forefront the studies of Beteille, *Résidences secondaires em milieu rural: L'exemple é basin rouergart é Viaur*, and of Cribier, *Les résidences secondaires dês citadins dans lês campagnes françaises*, respectively. Both studies were very limited. In 1975, Ortega, with *Residencias Secundarias y Espacio de ócio en Espana* and in 1976, Valenzuela, with *La residencia secundaria en la provincia de Madrid: Génesis y estructura espacial*, diversified and provided for a greater reflection about the theme (Cravidão, 2008). However, Miranda Monteiro (*apud* Cravidão, 2008), affirmed that the true pioneers in studies about second residences were the geographers, J. Vila, in 1962, and B. Pons, in 1964, even though it was through a broader approach that did not focus on second residences. In 1983, two important contributions were made to the theme by Miranda Monteiro with *Segunda Residencia na provincia de Valencia* (Cravidão, 2008), and by García Gomes, who in a very critical and "prophesizing" way (even at that time) in *Ecologia, médio ambiente y segunda residência*, affirmed that "A second residence is a clear, irrational and anti-economic example that is a contradictory dynamic of urban policy, that in itself exemplifies this irrational social model, which is based on economic development as its value and consumption as its means" (*apud* Mazón & Aledo, 2005).

According to Mazón and Aledo (2005), who probably used the term residential tourism for the first time was Jurdao Arrones, in 1979, in his book *Espana em venta: compra de suelo por extranjeros y colonización de campesinos em la Costa del Sol*. During this period, together with this change in the way that the theme was being approached, there was an intensification in more critical investigations, bringing to light the extremely aggressive way that the urban panorama of Spain was being altered by the rapid development of residential tourism.

According to Roca and Oliveira-Roca (2009), who both highlighted the work of English geographer John Terrence Coppock, the study of spatial distribution and the conceptualization of second residences is not very common, adding to this investigative logic (besides Coppock) some important studies as can be seen in the following citation.

> Barke (1991), who analysed the spatial distribution of second residences in Spain during the 1970s and 1990s; Deffner et al. (2007) who presented a spatial typology based on the proportion of empty accommodation in the Greek municipalities of Evoikos; Shellito and Pijanowski (2003) that analysed the spatial distribution of seasonal use residences in the Great Lakes region; Gallent et al. (2003) who discussed the changing geography of second residences in rural Wales; Colas and Cabrerizo (2004) who utilized a multiple regression technique to identify the spatial distribution factors of second residences in Spain; Visser (2004) who presented a typology of regions in accordance with the use of second residences in South Africa. Marjavaara and Müller (2007) that studied attractive sceneries for second residences in Switzerland. (ROCA & OLIVEIRA-ROCA, 2009).

As can be observed, from the point of view of the receivers, Spain is the owner of a considerable number of scientific studies tackling the problem of tourist real estate development in its territory, with a focus on second residences (DEMAJAROVIC, 2011); (ALEDO, 2013); (MARTÍNEZ, 2003); (ARTACHO, 2014); (CONTRERAS, 2010). This position at the forefront was acquired in virtue of the growing process of expansion of second residences, which transformed Spain into the second major tourism center in the world, and the first in the number of second residences in Europe, accounting for 32% of this real estate park in Europe, followed by: Portugal, 26.9%, Greece, 22.7%, and Italy, 17.7% (Gili apud Anderaos, 2005). Meanwhile, when the studies are developed from the viewpoint of the emitters, the majority come from England and Germany, who are the biggest purchasers of second residences in Spain. Researchers of other countries have also investigated second residences, such as: Müller and Marjavaara (2011) in Switzerland, Matteucci (2011) in Nicaragua, Wilkinson (2009) in Canada and Pienaar and Visser (2009) in South Africa. It is important to highlight the special attention given to the Spanish studies in this article, because as well as the fruitful production that has occurred on this research theme from this country, 28.3% of the complexes installed in the northeast of Brazil come from Spain.

4. A Tourist Real Estate Complex (TREC)

The term "tourist real estate complex" began to be used very recently in Brazil with the goal being to denominate the mega-undertakings that have begun to spring up through the association of the resort segment with the tourist mode well-characterized by "sun and sea" destinations (second residences). For this reason, it is common to see the wrong utilization of the term residential tourism or real estate tourism, or even second residence tourism, as a way of denominating Tourist Real Estate Complexes (TRECs). According to Fonseca et al (2007), what principally differentiates tourist real estate and tourism in its strict sense, is the form of circulation, as much physical as that of capital, within the tourist business chain. With it being common to have commercialization of the scenery, the utilization of the environment as a financial asset, and the consumption of space in a seasonal way.

In this way, the TRECs can be conceptualized as conglomerates that, within their systematically organized structure, unite resorts, residences, golf courses, marinas and other leisure equipment in just one tourist product, and which complement each other to attend to the necessities of leisure and spare time, as much as those of the traditional tourist, as those of the residential tourist, assuming in this way, a fusion between the tourist element and that of real estate.

It should be observed, however, that residential tourism enters with one of the fundamental components for the existence of a TREC, namely a *resort,* which on the majority of occasions includes golf courses, water sports and a diverse infrastructure of services. Nonetheless, it can be affirmed that the necessity for the commercialization of second residences is the main origin of this new model of touristic undertaking, motivated principally by the constant and growing expansion of the real estate market for new types of business that are more profitable and attractive, particularly during the times of apparent crisis, as can be observed in the following citation.

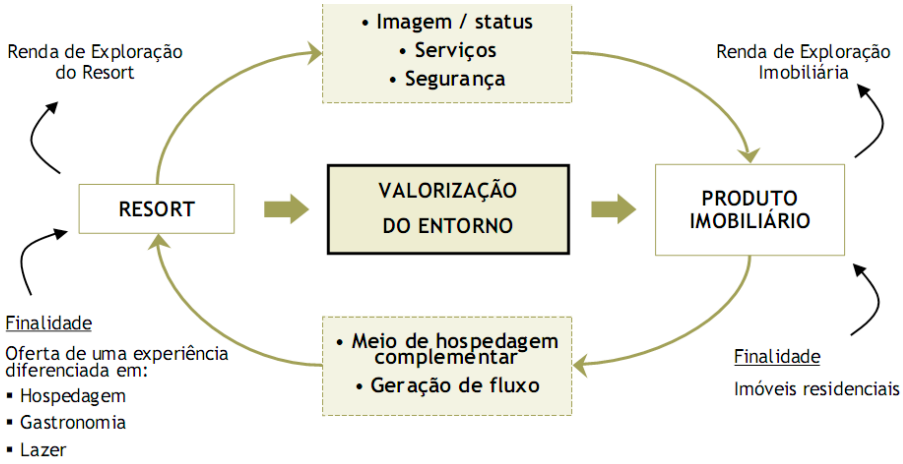
> The instability of the civil construction sector (...) turns the tourism sector attractive to entrepreneurs from this industry. The necessity for the migration of capital from one sector of the economy to the other, as a way of guaranteeing its reproduction in moments of crisis, is one of the trigger factors for the marriage between contractors and the activity of tourism. (CRUZ, 2000).

The model represented by the TRECs considerably elevates the possibility of the financial return of investors from this new segment. It is the association between resorts and the tourism of second residences that turns the TRECs into undertakings so highly desired by investors and entrepreneurs from the real estate and tourist industries. According to Canteras, Vasquez and Moura (2005), the major difference between a tourist real estate product and a pure real estate product is the leveraging of value afforded by an element that has its own life, whether it is a hotel, or more frequently, a composition of diverse facilities like golf, tennis or a theme park. The layout represented in figure 1 demonstrates how this leveraging of value functions in a TREC.

However, as Silva *et al* (2012) affirm, the environmental impact is considerable in this type of tourism, being produced by the exacerbated consumption of water, the extrapolation of the cargo capacity of the natural sites and the alteration of the surroundings. "It is not simply the expansion of the urbanized area that is in play and yes the production of territories of tourist valorization, capturing the singularity of nature or the local culture by means of transformation of the land" (SILVA et al, 2012, p. 137).

Due to the differential that tourist real estate activity has over the development of resorts and second residences on an isolated basis, the model has become hegemonic in the development of tourism in traditional destinations. According to Aledo (2008), there are three reasons that explain the rapid growth of the tourism-real estate model in Spain (the country seen as the most important reference point in the world) and where the model can be found in a well-advanced part of the development process:

Figure 1: The relationship for the leveraging of value in a TREC



Source: HVS International (*apud* Canteras, Vasquez & Moura, 2005).

> The first is of economic nature, a house in a "resort" with "green" costs 40% more than in another without these facilities (Greenpeace, 2006: 14). The second is the impossibility of finding land near the coast owing to the case of total urban contamination of the coast. And the third the disqualification of some coastal destinations as a consequence of the massification, the deficit of services and infrastructure (Vera Rebollo, 1997), and problems with a lack of security (MAZÓN y ALEDO, 2005c). (ALEDO, 2008, p. 105).

According to Rosa and Tavares (*apud* Dória, 2007), the alliance of real estate undertakings with resorts, is a way of compensating the slow return on capital invested in hotel or real estate projects on an isolated basis, as this way the real estate valorization is accentuated by the possibility of having access to the resort's services, together with the advantage of the compensation of risk and/or the greater return on investment, when compared with traditional hotel management. In other words, a mechanism that is characteristic in capitalist economies that allows for new ways to accumulate capital. According to Harvey (2005), these new forms of accumulating capital are a result of expansion and geographical concentration efforts, which easily explains the important participation of foreign capital (principally, Portuguese and Spanish) in the Brazilian northeast in this new type of investment. Evidently, after the crisis of 2008 there was a retraction of these complexes and "a reduction in the number and quantity of foreign capital inputs" (SILVA *et al*, 2012, p.141).

5. TRECs – The New Large Estates of Northeast brazil

The experience of the results with tourist real estate undertakings in Brazil is still in the very early stages of development, bearing in mind that until recently there had still not been any completely finished. The Sauípe Coast Tourist Complex could be considered the embryo of this model in Brazil. Even though it had not been implanted as a traditional tourist real estate complex, in other words, including the sale of second residences, Odebrecht, the entrepreneur behind the project and the owner of a large extension of land in Sauípe[ii], has planned it with this goal in mind and today profits from the commercialization of the second residences in the surrounding area of the complex.

Sauipe Coast is the first and most well-known Brazilian tourist complex, and began in 2000 (PRODETUR/NE I phase) along the Coqueiros Coast, on the north coast of Bahia. It is a milestone in Brazilian tourist activity in virtue of the amounts invested, and the repercussion and impact as a result of its implantation. The complex has consolidated the northeast region of Brazil as the great "tourist cluster" of the country, attracting the majority of tourist real estate investors because of the extremely favourable conditions it offers and the investment that has occurred in the state during the time of PRODETUR/NE.

> PRODETUR is a credit program for the public sector (states and municipalities) that was conceived to create conditions that are favourable for the expansion and improvement of tourist activity in the Northeast Region, through the acquisition of resources from international promotion agencies like the Inter-American Development Bank – IDB (ENDRES, 2012, p.75).

As a governmental program, PRODETUR/NE was decisive in the 1980s and 1990s by means of the investments in infrastructure for tourism, promotion and the attraction of touristic undertakings, urbanization and sanitation of touristic areas, definition of touristic centers, qualification of international real estate agents, amongst other actions that reconfigure the northeast coast (ALEDO et al, 2013); (PAIVA, 2010). Consequently, the northeast region has turned itself into one of the most sought after destinations in the world for the development of this new touristic model, namely of Tourist Real Estate Complexes.

In accordance with what can be observed in table 1, 53 TRECs were identified as to be implanted, or actually in the implantation phase in the northeast region of Brazil. Forty-seven of these provided information in relation to the area acquired for the implantation of the undertakings, amounting for 326.42 km^2 of area in the north-eastern coastal zone in the hands of these entrepreneurs. Amongst the totality of these projects (in progress, in execution, at a standstill and/or drafted) 43.39% are located in Bahia state and 17% in Rio Grande do Norte state (these two being the states with the greater percentage in relation to the number of undertakings).

In relation to the amounts invested, nine undertakings did not release this information. The total of the investments declared by the 44 that provided this information

amounted to around R$ 33 billion (table 1). Of this total, 30.2% of the undertakings have Brazilian origin, 28.3% Spanish origin and 41.5% originate from other European countries.

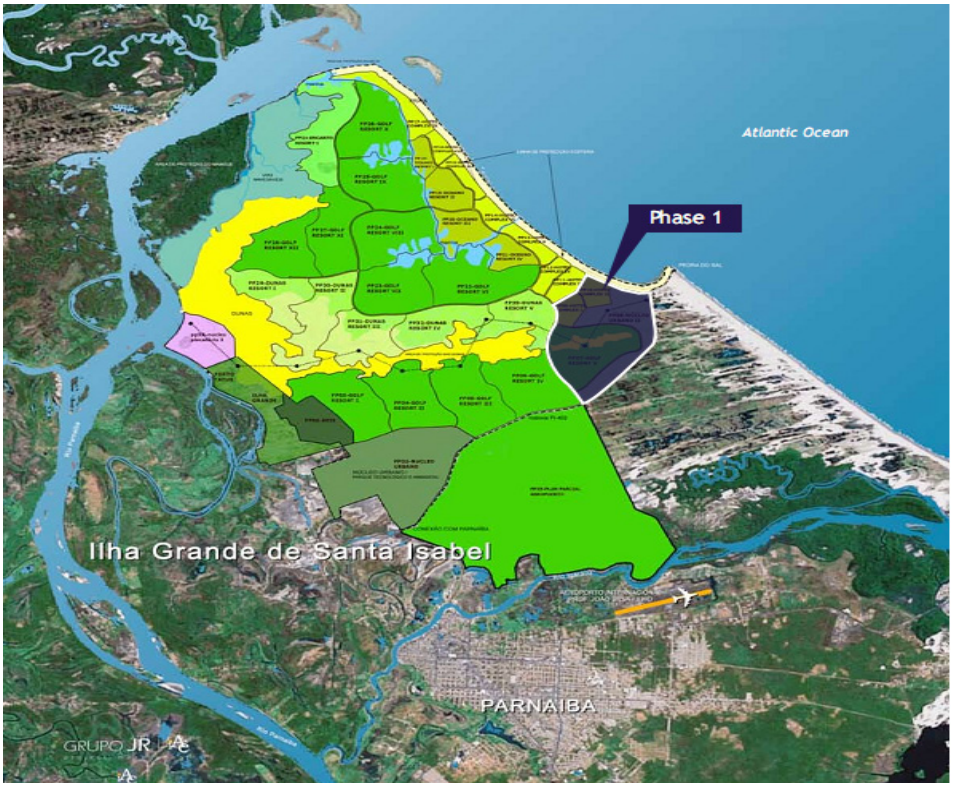
Table 1: Tourist Real Estate Undertakings in the Brazilian Northeast

Undertaking Name	State	Owner	Origin	Status	Investment	Area (hec.)
Green Wave Resort/Residence	Alagoas	Investur Brasil	Brazil	Project	R$ 224.000.000,00	127
Pontal do Camaragibe Resort/Residence	Alagoas	Investur Brasil	Brazil	Project	R$ 420.000.000,00	163
Duas Barras	Alagoas	Itacaré Capital Partners	England	Project	R$ 130.000.000,00	200
Aquapura (Warapuru)	Bahia	Diogo Vaz Guedes	Portugal	At a standstill	R$ 80.000.000,00	49
Hotel em Baixios	Bahia	GrupAce	Spain	In construction	R$ 300.000.000,00	1300
Ilha de Cajaiba Beach & Golf Resort	Bahia	Grupo Property Logic	Spain	Project	R$ 1.300.000.000,00	1100
Complexo Sol Meliá	Bahia	Grupo Sol Meliá	Spain	In construction	R$ 600.000.000,00	475
Iberostar Bahia	Bahia	Iberostar	Spain	Begun	R$ 250.000.000,00	213
Singlehome Trancoso Hotel/residence	Bahia	Investur Brasil	Brazil	Project	R$ 167.300.000,00	396
Marina Resort/Residence	Bahia	Investur Brasil	Brazil	Project	R$ 200.000.000,00	57
Boná Itacaré Hotel & Residences	Bahia	Investur Brasil	Brazil	Project	R$ 51.000.000,00	73
Conde Residen	Bahia	Investur Brasil	Brazil	Project	R$ 52.000.000,00	40
Txai Itacaré	Bahia	Investur Brasil	Brazil	Project	R$ 31.000.000,00	40
Praia da Ponta	Bahia	Investur Brasil	Brazil	Project	R$ 101.200.000,00	58
Atalaia	Bahia	Investur Brasil	Brazil	Project	R$ 20.800.000,00	10
Golf Boutique Resort e Residence	Bahia	Investur Brasil	Brazil	Project	R$ 59.000.000,00	7
Trancoso - Bahia Beach	Bahia	Itacaré Capital Partners	England	Project	R$ 16.000.000,00	25
Projeto Ondina	Bahia	Luso Brasil	Portugal	In construction	R$ 127.000.000,00	-
Costa de Embassai	Bahia	Orissio Investimentos	Italy	In construction	R$ 104.000.000,00	-
Vila de Embassai	Bahia	Orissio Investimentos	Italy	In construction	R$ 73.000.000,00	220
Bahia Beach	Bahia	Patrik Axelsson	Sweden	Begun	R$ 150.000.000,00	-
Resende Beach	Bahia	Patrik Axelsson/Björn Ulvaeus	Sweden	In construction	R$ 70.000.000,00	-
Reserva Embassai	Bahia	Reta Atlantico	Portugal	In construction	R$ 150.000.000,00	132
Complexo Terravista	Bahia	Terravista/Med	Germany	Project	R$ 90.000.000,00	1200
Ilha de Barra Vermelha Resort	Bahia	Universal Properties Brasil	France	In construction	R$ 225.000.000,00	203
Complexo Turistico Praia do Forte	Bahia	Grupo Trasam	Spain	In construction	R$ 2.200.000.000,00	376
Praia do Pirata	Ceará	Antonio Júlio Jesus Trinidade	Portugal	Project	R$ 60.000.000,00	200
Aquiraz Golf & Beach Villas	Ceará	Consórcio Aquiraz	Portugal	In construction	R$ 750.000.000,00	300
Playa Mansa	Ceará	Grupo Confide	Spain	In construction	R$ 450.000.000,00	300
Wind Beach	Ceará	Investur Brasil	Brazil	Project	R$ 18.000.000,00	1125
Long Beach	Ceará	Investur Brasil	Brazil	Project	Undisclosed	5401
Nova Atlantida	Ceará	Grupo JR	Spain	In construction	R$ 15.000.000.000,00	3126
Morro Branco Beach Resort	Ceará	Portimão	Portugal	Project	Undisclosed	-
Vila Galé Cumbuco	Ceará	Vila Galé	Portugal	In construction	R$ 600.000.000,00	10
Port Beach	Maranhão/Piauí	Investur Brasil	Brazil	Project	R$ 19.000.000,00	833
Ecocity Brasil	Piauí	Grupo JR	Spain	Project	R$ 1.000.000.000,00	8000
Pitimbu Golf Marine Resort	Paraíba	Grupo Inmovalero	Spain	Project	R$ 1.000.000.000,00	340
Enotel	Pernambuco	Enotel	Portugal	Project	R$ 90.000.000,00	24
Pestana Resort	Pernambuco	Grupo Pestana	Portugal	In construction	R$ 210.000.000,00	5
The Reef Club	Pernambuco	Grupo Qualta Resorts	Spain	Project	R$ 1.000.000.000,00	560
Costa de Guadalupe	Pernambuco	JCPM	Brazil	Project	Undisclosed	120
Reserva do Paiva	Pernambuco	Odebrecht/Brennand	Brazil	In construction	R$ 1.600.000.000,00	600
Teixeira Duarte	Pernambuco	Teixeira Duarte	Portugal	In construction	R$ 620.000.000,00	70
Cabo de São Roque	Rio G. do Norte	Brazil Development	Norway	At a standstill	Undisclosed	1400
Jacumã Beach Resort	Rio G. do Norte	Grupo Sol Meliá	Spain	In construction	R$ 200.000.000,00	16
São Miguel do Gostoso Resort & Golf	Rio G. do Norte	Grupo Inmovalero	Spain	Project	Undisclosed	220
Lagoa do Coelho Resort	Rio G. do Norte	Nicolás Mateos/Torrevisa	Portugal	Project	R$ 2.500.000.000,00	435
The Reef Club Pipa	Rio G. do Norte	Qualta Resorts	Spain	Project	R$ 400.000.000,00	460
Palmeira Golf Resort	Rio G. do Norte	Salt Properties	Iceland	Project	Undisclosed	-
Grand Natal Golf	Rio G. do Norte	Sanchez/SPEL	Spain	At a standstill	Undisclosed	2000
Elegance Natal Golf	Rio G. do Norte	Sanchez/SPEL	Spain	At a standstill	Undisclosed	30
Portal do Brasil Resort	Rio G. do Norte	Ultra Classic do Brasil	Brazil	At a standstill	Undisclosed	510
Brisa de Atalaia	Sergipe	INVI - Investment Vision do Brasil	Eastern Europe	Project	R$ 250.000.000,00	92
				Total	R$ 32.958.300.000,00	32642

Source of data: Direct research, 2013.

Invest Tur Brasil (today, Brazil Hospitality Group – BHG) alone, has already accumulated more than 83 million m² in coastal area in the northeast in its bank of land and projects. In the Delta do Parnaíba, in Piaui, the owners of the Ecocity Brasil undertaking possess, for the construction of a mega complex, 80 million m², or 80 km² (Figure 2).

Figure 2: Aerial view of the Ecocity Project, in Piaui.



Source: Ecocity, 2010.

Every north-eastern state has at least one undertaking to be implanted, reinforcing the previously mentioned tendency for the migration of tourist real estate market investments to this region. Nonetheless, the insistent financial crisis that originated in the world financial markets in 2008 and the activity of the Prosecutor's Office in some states, like Bahia, Ceará and Rio Grande do Norte, has placed a brake on this run to the northeast by the tourist real estate investors and entrepreneurs.

In Aquiraz, in Ceará, Luso-Brasileiro Aquiraz Investimentos AS Consortium's Aquiraz Riviera undertaking, has had various problems with the Federal Prosecutor's Office, including the request for the cancellation of the undertaking's environmental licenses in 2008, in virtue of the impact that it was causing, in accordance with the following piece from the newspaper Jornal O Povo:

> Paralysation of the construction of the Aquiraz Riviera undertaking and the cancelation of the environmental licenses conceded for its installation and for other undertakings that incorrectly occupy dunes, both fixed and mobile, as well as the deflation plain in the Aquiraz municipality, in the Metropolitan Region of Fortaleza. These are solicitations that are made by the Federal Prosecutor's Office in Ceará through public civil actions. This initiative was undertaken by the Republic Prosecutors Alessander Sales and Márcio Andrade Torres […] They also demand the cancelling of the environmental licenses for the installation of the undertaking by Ceará's State Secretary for the Environment […] They demand that the Brazilian Institute for the Environment and Renewable Natural Resources is responsible in the concession of environmental licensing, "as we have in question the territory considered as the coastal zone"(FAHEIMA, 2008).

According to Schärer (2009), during a presentation at the World Social Forum, in Belém, Pará, in January 2009, Ceará's tourism development model "is following paths that are not really sustainable as a result of public policies with a scarcity of participation on the part of society". The author provides an account of the real situation of the main tourist real estate undertakings in that state, including important information that is extremely difficult to obtain from the official bodies of disclosure, whom which, on many occasions, are involved with these undertakings. This account brings to light important information, as can be seen from the following ipsis litteris transcribed excerpt:

> PORTO CANOA – environmental crime and economically unfeasible – IS SHUT
> NOVA ATLÂNTIDA – the state government supported a Spanish businessman that is under investigation for financial crimes. Even the Spanish ambassador came to say that the land of the undertaking does not have native Indians – IS WITH THE FEDERAL PROSECUTOR'S OFFICE
> RESORT DO PIRATA – he took fishermen to France to promote the culture of the jangadeiros and things didn't go well with the people from Caetano de Cima that did not want to leave – and until now has not sold one square meter of land – IS STUCK
> RESORT DA PRAIA DE AQUIRAZ – the RESEX decree ended the dreams of Odebrecht and Company in Ceará, as the resort's promoter was not able to prove that he was the owner of the land. The Batoque RESEX was decreed by President Lula in the place of the 5 hotels (5 stars) and golf course – COMMUNITY VICTORY
> AQUIRAZ RIVIERA RESORT – IS WITH THE FEDERAL PROSECUTOR'S OFFICE
> CUMBUCO GOLF RESORT – IS WITH THE FEDERAL PROSECUTOR'S OFFICE
> VILA GALÉ GOLF RESORT, CUMBUCO – IBAMA embargo
> PLAYA MANSA RESORT FORTIM – IS WITH THE FEDERAL

> PROSECUTOR'S OFFICE
> BOA VISTA RESORT DE CAMOCIM – the resort's expansion plans were barred by the Maceió community fishermen that defended their right to the land in the courts - COMMUNITY VICTORY. (SCHÄRER, 2009).

In Rio Grande do Norte, where the situation is similar to that of Ceará, three tourist real estate mega-undertakings, announced in the last few years, have been suffering problems since 2007. The Grand Natal Golf, belonging to the Spanish group Sanchez, in partnership with the Rio Grande do Norte group, Spel (Sociedade Potiguar de Empreendimentos S/C Ltda.), a mega-project that plans to construct 14 hotels, more than 40,000 habitational units, five golf courses, leisure facilities, stores and restaurants, has gone through problems of debt rehabilitation proceedings in Spain and with the Prosecutor's Office in Brazil. The Cabo de São Roque Tourist Complex, belonging to the Norwegian group, Brazil Development and the businessman, Torben Frantzen (involving eight hotels) after the report by the English newspaper, The Mail on Sunday, also has problems with the Prosecutor's Office for suspicion of environmental crimes, as it is in an UNESCO environmental protection area (Churcher, 2008). A third undertaking, the Portal do Brasil Resort, belonging to the Rio de Janeiro company, Ultra Classic do Brasil LTDA, located in the Senador Georgino Avelino municipality, with an estimated investment of 560 million dollars, in an area of 510.25 hectares, including 180 houses and a condominium with two hotels, has also had problems with the Prosecutor's Office.

In Bahia, the state with the greatest number of announced undertakings, has also had problems similar to those of Ceará and Rio Grande do Norte. The most reported case was that of Warapuru, currently Aquapura Itacaré, an undertaking of the Portuguese businessman, João Vaz Guedes and three partners, on Engenhoca beach, along the Costa do Cacau, close to Ilhéus, and that even appeared in the Sunday magazine of The New York Times as a sophisticated resort with the project signed off on by Anouska Hemper, one of the most famous hotel designers in England. As much as for the refinement and priviledge (…) as for the minimalist construction that makes it almost invisible in the middle of the local vegetation" (Cavalcante, 2007). There will be 40 bungalows with a private pool and a butler 24 hours per day, and 17 villas to be commercialized as second residences. Estimated at R$ 80 million, it is practically ready, but it has an embargo on it from the Brazilian Institute for the Environment and Renewable Natural Resources, and by the Ministry of Mines and Energy.

In Piauí, the Ecocity mega-undertaking (of the same group as Nova Atlântida) that was announced as the biggest ecological tourist complex in the world, and with the goal of turning itself into the world capital of the environment, is currently at a standstill owing to problems with the environment and residents of the region. Even though it had already been given a licence by the Secretary for the Environment and Natural Resources (SEMAR), IBAMA entered with a denouncement contesting the competence of SEMAR to licence the undertaking, which was then accepted by the Federal Court.

In Pernambuco, where four TRECs should be implanted, the case of the undertaking of the Spanish group, Brasil Real State S.L., the holding company of the Brazilian company, Qualta Resorts Empreendimentos Imobiliários Ltda, owner of The Reef Club undertaking, which will be implanted on the Praia do Porto, around 100 km to the south of Recife, in the municipality of Barreiros, in an area of 493.42 hectares, including 180 hectares of forests and 80 hectares of wetlands, perfectly illustrates the speculative and unsustainable side of the tourist real estate model of this new process of occupation of the northeast Brazilian coast.

Even though, it does not have problems in the courts, it is completely at a standstill, without any perspective that work will begin, and without any official position in relation to the project's progress, to the commitments assumed and the expectations generated with the receiving community. This is a completely different picture to the one of the situation before the beginning of the global financial crisis, when the visits and the apparent socio-environmental actions in the municipality were frequent. On that occasion, the group proposed to attend to its objectives of valuing the environment and all its aspects, and of promoting social integration with the local community, including the promise of creating the Qualta Institute of Social Responsibility, the social arm of the undertaking, supposedly the organization responsible for the sustainable development of the region. With the arrival of the financial crisis the picture changed. The entrepreneurs reduced the frequency with which they were seen, as much in Barreiros, as in the capital of the state, Recife. The absence of those responsible began to generate speculation as to the solidness of the business group and the implantation itself of The Reef Club, reinforcing the tendency towards problems with cancellations and delays of tourist real estate undertakings announced for the northeast.

Illustration 1: The loss of credibility

TURISMO

Um projeto sem credibilidade

Depois que resort em Barreiros foi adiado, sócia do Qualta Resorts negocia participação em hotel na Praia dos Carneiros

Source: Sandes, 2009.

According to Peixoto Accyoli, Executive Director of ADIT, when commenting about the wave of problems with tourist real estate undertakings, the majority of the large scale undertakings will never be consolidated, "especially those developed by companies that don't have any background, that don't have funding, that include thousands of units and are a long way from consolidated tourist destinations […] the cowboys and speculators that search for easy profits and quickly leave the market" (ADIT, 2009). The President of ADIT himself, Felipe Cavalcante, affirmed that the crisis served to purify the tourist real estate market and separate the adventurous groups from those undertakings of more solid companies" (Sandes, 2009).

Illustration 2: An announcement about the new profile of investors.

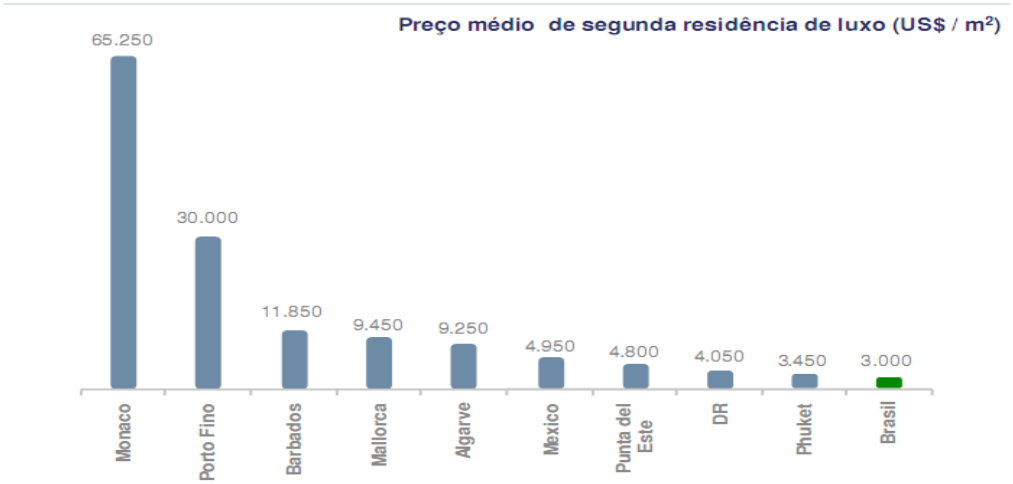
EXPECTATIVA Só o Qualta havia prometido investir R$ 1 bi na Praia do Porto. Agora não há nem prazo

Crise separou sólidos dos aventureiros

Source: Sandes, 2009.

The crisis, besides being a temporary brake, brought to light the mercantile and speculative propensity of these undertakings, in contrast with the sustainable talk of their environmental impact studies previously presented.

Chart 1: Average sale prices for second residences



Source: Canteras, Vasquez and Moura, 2008.

Chart 1, which presents a comparison of average prices of second residences in various locations around the world demonstrates that from the viewpoint of tourist real estate promotors, there is a large space for the expansion of this activity. Due to this marketing possibility, even whilst suffering the effects of the world financial crisis, investors continue to believe in this promising market, whilst at the same time waiting silently for the right time to pick up investments.

4. Conclusions

Considering the questions tackled in this article, even with the certainty that some of the undertakings identified will not be implanted in a short space of time, a serious problem has already established itself, namely, the concentration of an excessive amount

of land in the hands of a few owners for aims that are essentially for real estate and are speculative, with the majority involving foreign capital.

The data analysis in this study presented a preoccupying finding. The tourist real estate entrepreneurs are becoming true large land owners of the northeast Brazilian coastal zone. It is understood in this region, in its absolute majority, that the tourist real estate undertakings are constructed or projected until the legal limit of 33 meters from the high-tide line, and it can be affirmed that only the first kilometres of penetration into the coastline is the area of interest of the entrepreneurs in this market. Considering the estimated 3,300 km of extension of the northeast coast and supposing that, on average, the area which concentrates the source of interest for touristic exploration is a strip of land of 2 km beginning from the line of high-tide, it can be concluded that the area of greatest interest for the exploration of sun and sea tourism on the northeast Brazilian coast and, consequently, for the implantation of TRECs, corresponds to around 6,600 km^2. In accordance with what can be verified, 326.42 km^2, or in other words, around 5% of the area most sought after and strategically most important of the north-eastern coastal zone is already in the hands of only 47 entrepreneurs.

Only analysing the situation of two business operations, Invest Tur Brasil (today, Brazil Hospitality Group – BHG) with 82.6 km^2, and Ecocity, with 80 km^2, it can be observed that just these two investors hold almost 2.5% of the estimated 6,600 km^2 most sought after in the north-eastern coastal zone. Even more serious is that in this space are located extremely important areas of environmental protection, traditional communities and a considerable part of north-eastern historical and cultural heritage.

Even though, the potential for the generation of employment and income that undertakings the size of TRECs are capable of needs to be recognized, the analysis of the process for the development of tourism along the north-eastern Brazilian coast denotes the importance of the development of new studies to identify and prevent the grave socio-environmental impact that the implantation of TRECs is capable of causing to the fragile traditional communities of the northeast coastline. Such studies should deepen the discussion about the excessive concentration of spaces strategically important for the sustainable development of the Brazilian northeast in the hands of a few international entrepreneurs involved in businesses that are speculative and highly sensitive to the ups and downs of the global financial markets.

The increasing touristic nature of the north-eastern coastal zone, principally due to the development of the tourist real estate activity, can be viewed as a new form of colonization of the north-eastern Brazilian coast, once more originating from the peninsula of Iberia, and once again motivated by the search for the expansion of highly mercantile business, except that this time, the new major land owners of the northeast are the promotors and investors of tourist real estate.

Notes

i According to Knafou (1999), this consists in the appropriation and use of spatial elements by tourist activity, or in other words, they are "territories invented and produced by tourists, more or less retaken by tourist operators and by planners" (KNAFOU, 1999, p.73).

ii Sauípe is a district of the Mata de São João municipality, located on the north coast of Bahia state, in Brazil.

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Submitted on: 15/10/2014
Accepted on: 09/11/2016
http://dx.doi.org/10.1590/1809-4422ASOC141673V1932016

FROM RESIDENTIAL TOURISM TO TOURIST REAL ESTATE COMPLEXES: THE APPROPRIATION OF THE COASTAL ZONE IN THE NORTHEAST OF BRAZIL BY TOURIST REAL ESTATE ACTIVITIES

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***Abstract*:** Through the time, tourism has suffered changes in its different ways of migration. In the past century, in the 1970's, a new type of tourism strengthened, mainly in Spain, which was named tourism of second homes. In Brazil, associated with traditional tourism, this residential tourism was consolidated in the Northeast Coast, from the 1990's, giving rise to the tourist real estate complex. In this context, this research aimed at mapping these tourist real estate complex and discussing about evidences of this model in that region. Data were collected through a field and documental research. From this study, it was verified that more than 50% of those of the 53 identified tourist real estate complex belong to foreigner groups, where many of them were embargoed, not finished or are even being built. It was concluded that every Brazilian northeast State has at least one mega project of this type operating, being concluded or designed, in contrast to the environmental discourse of these projects, besides the social segregation and appropriation of space, typical from this kind of activity.

***Keywords*:** real estate tourism activity, tourist resort, Brazilian Northeast, residential tourism.

***Resumo*:** O turismo ao longo do tempo sofreu modificações nas suas mais diversas formas de migrações. No século passado, um tipo de turismo se fortaleceu, principalmente na Espanha, nos anos 1970, foi o chamado turismo de segundas residências. No Brasil, associado ao turismo tradicional, o turismo residencial consolidou-se na costa nordestina a partir dos anos 1990, fazendo surgir os complexos turísticos imobiliários (CTIs). A pesquisa teve como objetivo mapear esses empreendimentos turísticos imobiliários e discutir sobre a evidência deste modelo na região. Os dados foram coletados por meio de pesquisa de campo, documental e bibliográfica. Revelou-se que mais de 50% dos 53 CTIs identificados pertencem à grupos estrangeiros e muitos deles foram embargados, não concluídos ou

ainda estão em fase de construção; evidenciou-se o caráter especulativo e mercantilista dos complexos turísticos imobiliários, em contraste com o discurso ambiental dos projetos, além da segregação social e apropriação do espaço, próprias desse tipo de empreendimento.

***Palavras-chaves*:** Atividade turística imobiliária, empreendimentos turísticos, Nordeste brasileiro, turismo residencial.

***Resumen*:** El turismo, con el curso del tiempo, sufrió modificaciones en sus más diversas formas de migraciones. En el siglo pasado, un tipo del turismo se fortaleció principalmente en España, en los años 1970, llamado turismo de segundas residencias. En Brasil, asociado con el turismo tradicional, el turismo residencial se consolidó en la costa del nordeste a partir de los años 1990, dando lugar a los complejos turísticos inmobiliarios (CTIs). La investigación tuvo como objetivo mapear esos emprendimientos turísticos inmobiliarios y discutir sobre la evidencia de este modelo en la región. Los datos fueron colectados por medio de la investigación de campo, documental y fuentes bibliográficas. Se reveló que más del 50% de los 53 CTIs identificados pertenecen a grupos extranjeros y muchos de ellos fueron embargados, no concluidos o aún están en fase de construcción; Se evidenció el carácter especulativo y mercantilista de los complejos turísticos inmobiliarios, contrastando con el discurso ambiental de los proyectos, además de la segregación social y la apropiación del espacio propias de los emprendimientos.

***Palabras-clave*:** Actividades turísticas inmobiliarias; emprendimientos turísticos; Nordeste brasileño; turismo residencial.